

**Town of Hamilton
Community Preservation Committee
November 12, 2009 Minutes**

Attendees

The meeting was held in the Memorial Room of Town Hall with the following Committee members in attendance: Tom Catalano, Chris Davis, Peter Britton, Ray Whipple, Jay Butler, and Leigh Keyser. Christine Berry as CPC Coordinator was also present. With a quorum present the meeting was called to order at 7:38pm.

Acceptance of minutes from September 10th CPC meeting

The minutes from the September 10th CPC meeting were accepted.

Eligibility Determination for FY 2011 for CPA Funding

Playground Enhancement for Patton Park – Mike and Traci Massimi

Mike Massimi was present to discuss this proposal. The request is for \$60,000 for a new playground structure at Patton Park. New playground equipment could be constructed meet the needs of a broad range of children, ages 2-12. The current playground structure was designed to meet the needs of children ages 2-5.

While this project would be a significant asset to improving the use of Patton Park, it relates directly to the Newton CPA Supreme Judicial Court decision; the park is already used for recreational purposes; recreational uses are not being created or preserved therefore it is inconsistent with the purposes of CPA.

Fortunately, if Senate Bill 90, An Act to Sustain Community Preservation, passes this project would become eligible for CPA funds. The applicant should work with the Recreation Department on this proposal for next year, assuming the bill becomes law. There may also be an opportunity to partner with the Hamilton Wenham Mother's Club, who has expressed an interest in installing fencing in the Park along Bay Road to alleviate concerns about children running into the road.

Highland Street and Asbury Street Pedestrian Path

Christopher Little was present to discuss this proposal, which requests \$85,000 for a pedestrian path along Highland Street and upper Asbury Street. Vehicles travel at high speeds on this road making it difficult to walk safely along this road. The pathway is proposed to be asphalt, but use of wood chips could be a possible option. Little site work would be required. Approximately two trees would need to be removed. The majority of residents along Asbury Street and Sharon Road are supportive of this project.

The Committee expressed concern that wetland crossings would be needed as part of this project and also that costs could be high due to the need to bid the project competitively and pay prevailing wages.

The Committee decided that this project could be eligible for CPA funds, but recommended that the applicant coordinate with John Tomasz, DPW Director on developing the final application. DPW may be able to help with the project though they are spread quite thin.

The applicant should also check to see if the proposed project would be located within the right-of-way.

Historic Resources Room at Town Hall

Jane Wetson and Annette Janes were present to discuss this proposal which requested \$40,000 for the rehabilitation of a portion of the Town Hall basement to preserve the records and artifacts currently stored there. The proposal includes converting the room and vault to a climate controlled and secure room. This is also the room that the Hamilton Historical Society currently uses. At this point, staff cannot use this portion of the basement due to the damp conditions. There are many significant records being stored down there including diaries of early Hamilton settlers. The Hamilton Historical Society would be able to contribute a small amount of funds to this project.

The Committee agreed this project was eligible for CPA funds under the historic preservation criteria. The project will serve to both restore Town Hall and preserve the historic documents found here. The Committee asked that specific examples of the artifacts and records found here be included in the final application. The Town also needs to be prepared for the added operational costs maintaining this type of room can incur.

Old Library Requests – Replacement of Windows at Old Library, Update Heating System at Old Library, New Electric Stove and New Countertop at Old Library, Room Divider at Old Library

Melissa Roy and Mimi Fanning were present to discuss these proposals which included replacement of the windows, estimated at \$31,000; updating of the heating system, estimated at \$10,000, a new electric stove and countertop, estimated at \$1,750; and a room divider, estimated at \$9,000.

The windows at the old library are reportedly very inefficient and do not open and close. This proposal was brought forward to the Committee two years ago but was not pursued because of the uncertain future of the building. The same is true today. Replacement of the windows is in line with the recommendations of the engineering study. New windows and a new heating system would allow the building to be used year-round. The heating bills for the old library currently exceed \$6,000 per year. The old library may qualify for a new heating system through an energy audit program; payback is expected in 10-years. The energy audit results are due in on November 16th.

The building is not equipped with a stove and could benefit from one. Hamilton is not able to participate in Meals on Wheels because there is nowhere to heat up food. The Recreation Department would also be able to utilize a stove for cooking programs. A room divider would enable the building to be used more fully. Based on feedback from the Community Preservation Coalition, it is unlikely that a new stove, countertop, and room divider will qualify for CPA funds because there is no historic resource being preserved.

There are three departments actively using the building – Council on Aging, Recreation, and Fire. The building is also open in the evenings for town board/committee meetings. Jane Wetson expressed interest in holding elections there. The Board of Selectmen should be making a decision about the building.

Hamilton Housing Authority Kitchenettes

The Hamilton Housing Authority is requesting an additional \$111,000 to complete the renovation of the remaining kitchenettes. This project has been determined eligible in the past.

Preservation and Restoration of Cutler Park

Jim Hankin, Coordinator for the Conservation Commission submitted a request for \$12,000 for the preservation and restoration of Cutler Park as well as the development of a seating area. It is likely the preservation of the pond is an allowable use of CPA funds, but not the development of a seating area because the park is an existing recreational resource.

Community Farm Idea discussion

There has been some interest in the development of a community farm. While the Committee was interested in exploring this idea, there was concern that it needed to have someone who would be able to volunteer the time necessary to implement the development of the community farm. It was agreed that we could probably find a parcel of land to use. Christine will contact some towns that have implemented community farms and see what they have learned from their experiences.

Meeting Adjournment

The meeting was adjourned at approximately 9:25pm.